

I was first informed about the plight of these families after I met Charles Caulfield, his wife Kathleen, and their four children, who reside in my district. I learned that despite the fact that they committed no crime in the United States and despite the fact that neither the Irish, nor British Governments are seeking to extradite them, the Federal Government is going to extraordinary lengths to force their family to return to a dangerous conflict.

Mr. Speaker, Kathleen Caulfield has been harassed and detained by British security forces in Ireland while being over 6 months pregnant and without being charged with a crime. I believe the threat of persecution and harassment for these seven families due to their beliefs in a united Ireland is genuine.

Immigration Judge Williams has recently ruled that one of the men facing deportation, Brian Pearson, should be granted political asylum due to the fact his acts in Ireland were political in nature and the threat of persecution is great. I am deeply disappointed with the INS.

President Clinton, by the way, in 1992 stated there would be no more Joe Doherty's. I ask that this administration be true to that pledge.

CONGRESS STILL RESPONSIBLE TO DEBATE, CRAFT, AND PASS TAX BILLS

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I commend the hard work of our budget negotiators for coming to an agreement that balances the budget by the year 2002. It is a positive step. But let me make it perfectly clear, as a member of the Committee on Ways and Means, I take seriously my responsibilities and constitutional authority to debate, craft, and pass tax bills out of this committee. In no way should the President dictate or bind our committee as to what should and should not be in any tax bill. That is what the committee process and this Congress was designed to do.

We will give full backing to the gentleman from Texas, Chairman ARCHER, when he says we will accept the number given to us by the budget negotiators and the President, but we reserve the right to craft the provisions that are in any tax bill that comes before the committee and we may make them higher in the interest of the American people. It is that simple.

BLOCK GRANTS DO NOT WORK

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, already there is evidence that the Republicans' mindset on block

grants do not work. Why I say that, in my home State of Texas, unfortunately, the Medicaid block granting process has hit home in the 18th Congressional District.

Yesterday, the Texas Health Department issued its contracts on HMO's for our community. Is it not interesting that the largest hospital district that serves the poor, the Harris County Hospital District, did not get a Medicaid contract from the Texas Department of Health? Is it not interesting that Eric Baumgartner and the Texas Department of Health decided to exclude the Harris County Health District in this Medicaid contract, the one district that serves the largest number of individuals who are indigent.

There exists a serious lack of African-American, Asian, and Hispanic representation within the top management and decisionmaking groups within the six HMO award recipients for Harris County, which has a Medicaid majority population of African-Americans, Asians, and Hispanics.

It seems outrageous that in this time when we say block grants work, I am saying they do not work because they had denied opportunity to the bulk of my constituents in the 18th Congressional District.

EFFECT OF CAPITAL GAINS TAX REDUCTION

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to comment again, as I have in the past, on one of the most important pieces of legislation that has been introduced in this Congress. It is H.R. 14, which is designed to take the top rate on capital gains from 28 to 14 percent.

Now, many people have in the past called this a tax cut for the rich, but we all know from every bit of empirical evidence that we have that it would in fact do more for working families in this country than virtually any of the so-called family tax cuts that we have.

In fact, a study by the Institute for Policy Innovations found we could increase the take-home pay for the average family by \$1,500 per year if we were able to reduce the top rate on capital gains from 28 to 14 percent.

The gentleman from Texas, [Mr. ARCHER], and others on the Committee on Ways and Means very much want to do this. I am pleased that the President has indicated his support for a broad-based reduction in capital gains. It should be zero, but I will accept 14 percent.

BATTLE AGAINST ILLEGAL DRUGS SHOULD GO ON

(Mr. SOUDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I realize the election is over, but just because

an election ended our drug war should not end. The battles against illegal drugs should go on. I am very concerned that the President of the United States, who had backed away and we put a lot of pressure on in the last year and a half and he responded, he appointed Barry McCaffrey drug czar.

General McCaffrey has done an excellent job in speaking out and bringing to the attention of America, and through the election, that both parties were united against the drug war. What happens when the election ends? Now apparently we are going to nominate for an ambassador a man who blasted our drug czar for saying he was going to enforce the drug laws of the United States over this so-called medicinal use of marijuana.

There is no medicinal use of marijuana. There is a THC component that is available in other drugs. It is a backdoor way to legalize drugs in America. Why would we send an ambassador to Mexico? Mr. Weld, the Governor of Massachusetts, why would we send him to the country that we have been trying to send the message that they need to work to crack down on drugs coming into America?

Then the House, where we said we would take the lead against illegal drugs, is apparently going to take back the right to certify or decertify countries for their drug behavior. How can we as a House point our finger at others if we do not lead ourselves? I hope we can change this bill before tomorrow.

WILL THE STATUS QUO IN CHINA BECOME THE STATUS QUO IN HONG KONG

(Mr. WOLF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, this week, Newsweek magazine, which is the country's premier news magazine, focused on Hong Kong and its return to China later this summer. The world is waiting to see if what has become the status quo in the People's Republic of China will become the status quo in Hong Kong.

How long will it take until those who desire to express their love of a Democratic system be banned from public process? How long will it take for pastors and priests and religious leaders to be barred from practicing their faith freely and leading believers in worship and obtaining Bibles and other spiritual material?

If we want to protect Hong Kong, the best thing that we can do for this House is to vote to deny MFN for China, because that will send a message to the Chinese Government like no other message that we could send. I strongly urge my colleagues to read this article in Newsweek.